GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2551
ANSWERED ON:14.03.2016
Role of Tourism in Sustaining Economy
Kaswan Shri Rahul

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether a decline has been registered in the tourism industry during the last three years;
(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and
(c) the steps taken by the Government to promote the tourism industry?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR TOURISM (INDEPENDENT CHARGE)
(DR. MAHESH SHARMA)

(a): No, Madam. The Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India has shown continuous increase in last three years. The number of FTAs in India during 2013, 2014 and 2015 were 6.97 million, 7.68 million and 8.03 million, respectively.

(b): Does not arise.

(c): Various initiatives undertaken by the Ministry of Tourism for promoting tourism are as below:

i. Multilingual Tourist Infoline:

The Ministry of Tourism has launched the 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Info Line on 8.2.2016. The languages handled by the contact centers include ten International languages besides English and Hindi, namely, Arabic, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Chinese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. The multi-lingual helpdesk in the designated languages provides support service in terms of providing information relating to Travel & Tourism in India and assist the callers with advice on action to be taken during times of distress while travelling in India and if need be alert the concerned authorities.

ii. E − Tourist Visa (e-TV):

The Government of India has introduced the facility of e-TV for the citizens of 150 countries at 16 airports. Introduction of e-TV is a Path breaking measure by the Government in easing entry formalities in the country.

Government of India has also revised the e-TV fees by grouping them in four slabs of 0, US$25, US$48 and US$60 from November 3, 2015. Earlier e-TV application fee was US$60 and bank charge as US$2 which was uniform for all the countries. The revision of Visa fee has been done on the principle of reciprocity. Bank charges have also been reduced from US$2 to 2.5 % of the e-TV fee. During 2015, a total of 4,45,300 e-TV holders visited India indicating the success of the new online process.

iii. Publicity and Promotion:

The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, promotes India as a holistic destination in the international markets. As part of its promotional activities, the MoT releases campaigns in the international markets under the Incredible India brand-line to showcase various tourism destinations and products including its cultural heritage.

Moreover, a series of promotional activities are being undertaken in tourist generating markets overseas through the India Tourism Offices abroad with the objective of showcasing India's tourism potential and promoting tourism to the country. These promotional activities include participation in travel fairs and exhibitions; organising road shows, Know India seminars & workshops; organizing and supporting Indian food and cultural festivals; publication of brochures, offering joint advertising and brochure support, and inviting media personalities, tour operators and opinion makers to visit the country under the Hospitality programme of the Ministry.

The Ministry of Tourism provides financial assistance to Stakeholders and Tourism Departments of States/Union Territories for undertaking promotional activities under the Marketing Development Assistance (MDA) Scheme.

iv. Central Financial Assistance (CFA):

Ministry of Tourism (MoT) operates various schemes through which Central Financial Assistance (CFA) is provided to States/UTs for overall development and promotion of tourism.

MoT has launched following two schemes for development of tourism in thematic manner:

Swadesh Darshan: Swadesh Darshan was launched for development of theme based tourist circuits in a way that caters to both mass

and niche tourism in a holistic manner. Thirteen Circuits namely North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit and Heritage Circuit have been identified for development under this Scheme.

National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive (PRASAD):

This Scheme has been launched for the development and beautification of pilgrimage sites to tap the growth of domestic tourists driven by religious sentiments and to augment tourism infrastructure at places of pilgrimage to facilitate pilgrims/tourists. Cities namely Amritsar, Kedarnath, Ajmer, Mathura, Varanasi, Gaya, Puri, Dwarka, Amaravati, Kanchipuram, Vellankanni, Kamakhya and Patna have been identified for infrastructure development under the scheme.
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